

Application No. 09/784,076
Amendment dated 7/9/04
Reply to Office Action of February 9, 2004

REMARKS / ARGUMENTS

The Examiner is thanked for the Office Action of February 9, 2004. This Amendment is in full response thereto. Applicants respectfully request entry of the same as it places the application into condition for allowance.

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected claims 1-9, 12-18 and 20-22 under 35 USC §103(a) as obvious over the article titled, "Production of Polysulfide Liquor in a Kraft Mill's Causticizers" by Uloth et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

The Uloth et al. article teaches an MnO_2 concentration of 0.16 to 0.18 g/L (pg. 225, ¶ 4). Also, it teaches the importance of polysulfide generation in the presence of lime mud as a practical alternative to expensive commercial carbon catalysts for generating polysulfides (pg. 223, ¶ 3, pg. 231, ¶ 5).

Applicants have amended the claims to require provision of a liquor in the absence of lime mud wherein a transition metal oxide catalyst has a concentration in the liquor ranging from 0.25 to 6.5 g/l. Support for this amendment is found in originally filed claims 1 and 18, pg. 14, Ins. 8-14, and Fig. 16. Applicants submit that the Uloth article fails to disclose, teach or suggest the claimed invention. Indeed the Uloth et al. article teaches away from generation of polysulfide generation in the absence of lime mud.

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone call would expedite prosecution of the application, he is invited to call the undersigned attorney at the number listed below. A Petition for a two month extension of time is being contemporaneously submitted with this Amendment, along with the required fee. Otherwise, it is believed that no fee is due at this time. If that belief is incorrect, please debit deposit account number 01-1375. Also the Commissioner is authorized to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 01-1375.

Respectfully submitted,

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION UNDER 37 CFR 1.8(a)

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being transmitted via facsimile to telephone number 703-872-9306 on this 9th day of July, 2004.



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